

The author of FIRE IN THE BLOOD

CLARKE COLLINS



*Don't Say
Goodnight*

DON'T SAY GOODNIGHT

Author

Clarke Collins

Series Name

The Say Anything Series #1

Book Length

Novella (Approx. 15,600 words)

Book Genre

Contemporary Interracial Romance / Women's Fiction

Blurb #1

A married couple in conflict finds their commitment to each other tested during an evening filled with temptation and unintended consequence. Will they find their way back to each other or does fate have other plans?

Blurb #2

In DON'T SAY GOODNIGHT, we meet married couple Gabriel and Alicia on an evening filled with temptation and unintended consequence. As they struggle with the harsh realities of their not-so-happily ever after will they find their way back to each other or does fate have other plans?

Don't Say Goodnight is part one in the *Say Anything* series. This book ends with a cliffhanger.

Purchase Links

Amazon Link

US: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07K6Q15BB>

UK: <https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B07K6Q15BB>

Excerpt

“Ready to close your tab?”

Gabriel thought for a minute. The hands on his watch told him it was well past happy hour and their appointment with the counselor, two hours ago. He figured Ali was already back at the apartment by now. The damage done. Might as well get ready. A couple of drinks to smooth out the edges couldn't hurt any more than what was coming.

“No, I think I'll have another,” he said.

“You think?” The bartender asked, his impatience turned to annoyance.

“I'll *have* another,” Gabriel replied, raising his glass in hand.

The bartender nodded and then turned toward the bottle lined shelves behind him.

Gabriel thought of Ali again, how he'd wanted to be there for her. To try and understand how they'd gotten to the place they were, but earlier, as he made his way down the busy city streets toward the counselor's office, he felt his heart ready to explode.

Did he really want to know the truth? Reveal the dark places he'd tried so hard to suppress? Those questions and more played over and over in his mind, until he found himself standing in front of the only bar he could tolerate this side of the city. The one place the hipsters avoided. But sadly, the yuppies didn't.

He emerged from his thoughts as the bartender returned with his drink. Gabriel thanked him and laid six crisp dollar bills on the counter. He chuckled to himself. There was a time when he counted change to buy a drink at the bar. Now look at him. He closed his eyes and pressed his lips to the rim of the glass. Another hour to himself wouldn't

deepen the hurt that they'd already endured for the past year. After a while it would be hard to tell one pain from the other. Especially when he couldn't feel anymore.

Potential Q&A for Author

Your latest book, *Don't Say Goodnight*, is a tearjerker. What is the first book that made you cry?

Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. I read it in my early teen years and I remember being so affected by it. I haven't read it since. Anyway, the book is quite modest in length and style compared to her other works, but the depth is marrow deep. The way Morrison penned that story hit every nerve-ending I had at the time. It was as though she had written it just for me. When I talk to others who have read the book, they can relate to what I'm saying. Her work is something you get, or you don't. There's no in between. If you get it, you'll be moved. So, keep a tissue box handy.

How did publishing your first work, *Fire in the Blood*, change your process of writing?

Publishing my first work, *Fire in the Blood*, was a sort of litmus test of fear for me. I've been honing my skills as a writer for more than ten years now, but in all this time I've never felt good enough or ready. My writing process didn't change but how I approached my fear of failure did. I'm not ashamed to admit that it took a nudge from my writing professor and course-mates for me to take that next step and ask the public, *hey, I wrote this, will you buy it and read it?* So, if anything changed, it's that although I still fear failure, I don't let it paralyze me into inaction. I leaped, and now I'm here.

What is the difficulty in writing stories set against the backdrop of historical events?

Well, there's pressure to get things exactly right. You have to do your research and you'll miss the mark. It's inevitable. Unless you're a historian or have a kick ass research assistant, something will go wrong. That's why when I delve into stories set against familiar events in history, I stop at the familiar. Not literal. I like having full freedom when I pen a story and history stymies that because it's fixed. So, I stick to what might have, could have happened around that time. Not what really happened. If you get my meaning.

In *Don't Say Goodnight*, what was your hardest scene to write?

Believe it or not, the hardest part was the beginning. In the first iteration of the story, it was a sticky point for me. The opening came across as too mundane when I read it back. But after so many rewrites and adjustments, I realized that it had to be that way. There has to be build up in order to have that emotional impact needed at the end – and well - life can be that way. We start off having a normal day, crap happens, and then *pow*, it either all

goes wrong or it all goes well enough. We don't get many days where everything goes right.

What's your favorite underappreciated romance novel?

That's tough to say. I cannot name just one. When it comes to romance, nowadays I mainly read indies. But the first one I usually mention is *Rivers* by Michael Farris Smith. It's not romance per se, but it's the kind of romance I prefer; an element of a larger story. Aside from that, I've found some diamonds in the rough. But it's all subjective. I love Adrienne Ruvalcaba's *My Best Friend's Wife* trilogy. The first two books are really engrossing. There's a lot of heart in that story and a string of authenticity (particularly in the second book) that I don't find often in contemporary romance. Also, I read a YA book that caught me off guard. Jamie Reed's *Keep Me in Mind*. Some call it the interracial *Notebook*, but I think that's selling it short. I thought it was much better. Simplified and true to teenage angst without being over-wrought. Honorable mentions would be *25 to Love* by Joye Johnson and *Love, Edy* by Shewanda Pugh.

Do you read your book reviews? How do you deal with bad or good ones?

Yes, I read *every* review. Call me a masochist or simply curious. But I have a hard time not looking. Plus, I enjoy reviews. I write them for books I've read. So why would I avoid my own? It's like when you see the guys in orange vests with flares in their hands on the road ahead. It could be a tragedy or a minor detour for construction. Either way, you can't help but look. You have to know.

Author Bio

Clarke Collins is a not-so-average Midwestern American mom by day and vivid dream wrangler by night. Aside from her vast consumption of romance and speculative fiction novels, her writing inspiration comes from an array of influential talents, across artistic disciplines and genres. A perfect life for Clarke is one filled with books and infinite time to read them all.

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Thank you,
Clarke
C.C.